

Employee Comments - By Job Title

**Agency 530: Department of Family and Protective Services
Quarter 1 Fiscal Year 2024
9/1/2023 to 11/30/2023**

1. WHY ARE YOU LEAVING?

"Other" Reasons for Leaving

No exiting employees answered "Other" among their reasons for leaving.

Further Comments

September 2023

1. At the start of hire, new hires are informed that the job is a hybrid job but then once you start you need to be in the office five days a week until you are at the agency for 2-3 years according to hire ups. While they require you to be at the office, you are not allowed to have your own space unless you are one of the 'elites'.. No one tells you about CWOP in the interview. If you are assaulted at CWOP, supervisors strip you of your right to press charges for any damages or assaults. There is a lot of racism and bullying in the office that is not addressed properly or at all.
2. CWOP and impending CBC.
3. The reason that I took the position which I did was because of what I was told that I would be doing from my job interview. The information which I was provided in the interview by the hiring manager was materially false and misleading. If I had been provided with a true and accurate description of the position then I never would have been interested in moving forward with it. My life was up-ended in a substantial manner for a position which did not actually exist.
4. CWOP has been catastrophic for DFPS. DFPS completely failed the children in foster care and more so with their employees. I'd been assaulted, threatened countless times and was forced to travel at times distances of over 250 miles round trip to watch kids at hotels! Female workers get assaulted and groped, CWOP kids run away and do drugs all the while these CWOP kids also engage in sex trafficking while on runaway. It's a disgrace! Everyone is leaving especially tenured workers like me. So the ones left have little to no experience. All commissioner Muth cared about was privatizing the Dept via CBC. This agency is falling apart and that is terribly sad for our Texas children, families and workers.
5. It was a combo of better pay/benefits and work stress in accordance with the new laws. Based on new laws we are unable to insure child safety and I cannot ethically support that. Privatization contributed to my decision as well.
6. Very poor pay. But the main reason for leaving is DFPS has very poor work life balance for employees. I do not think upper management realizes how poor moral is. All my friends who left or actively looking for new employment all say their biggest reason for leaving is the HORRIBLE work life balance.
7. I would have left sooner but I since I was so close to retiring that's what keep me here. The agency is a joke with the pay and equality in the workforce. I worked with the agency for 26 years and retired with annuity of 1,700 ish monthly. The is pathetic for someone serve 26 years.
8. I know the DFPS is undergoing some changes due to the transition to Community Based Care. I was new to CPS (Conservatorship), so it is difficult for me to know how many of the issues I experienced pertain to this, but it doesn't appear that very much planning was put into the transition. I do feel that I was encouraged to

check off boxes in my training rather than actually being given the opportunity for true hands-on learning, specifically the paperwork end of things. A caseworker's job is difficult by nature, but I felt as though the expectations from leadership made it even more difficult.

9. I left DFPS due to the lack of work life balance. The amount of casework is unattainable and leads to poor casework from caseworkers which will lead to additional child safety concerns. The lack of regard to child safety in areas is concerning. Our work is to promote child safety and best family outcomes however, the work is not being done properly. Trainees are not being properly trained. This agency depicts itself as not being an "I gotcha" agency however, good caseworkers fall through the cracks and are reprimanded while individuals who have no business being in child safety positions are not being held accountable. I loved going to work and working with families when I first started however, as I advanced, I was terrified that my name was going to be attached to a child injury due to lack of concern from caseworkers and supervisors. Outside stakeholder relationships are not good. This is associated to poor casework and supervision. Some children being in CWOP is also a direct result of caseworkers not doing casework. On the other hand, to get children out of CWOP, the state is placing children in further dangerous situations due to trying to get them in placements prior to the CBC going live.
10. It was becoming increasingly exhausting trying to work my regular caseload and work mandatory over time aka child without placement. I also felt very unsafe with the locations and the youth that are housed there. The youth are assaulting staff and we were expected to continue to show up because there is not one to watch the youth. I also felt as though work and CWOP was keeping from having a life with my own family.
11. I wanted to stay a few more years but the expectations/demands were unrealistic. I decided to leave to do my way with the stress which was affecting my mental health.
12. The only reason I left was because my department (fad) is being privatized. I enjoyed my job and had no issues. I was not successful in obtaining other positions that I applied for. I did not leave voluntarily and I feel that the Agency should've done better to help those who wanted to stay with the Agency. I know other regions got assistance when they were eliminated but not 3e. I was with the Agency for 16 years and I feel like that my experience and tenure wasn't good enough for anyone.
13. My departure was due to a supervisor in my local office. Not my supervisor but one which I would be under should my direct supervisor be on leave, at training, etc.
14. Also no opportunity for advancement
15. I believe as employees we thrive in an environment where genuine positive encouragement and a sense of autonomy are provided which empowers, motivates, and encourages employees to be successful. Unfortunately, my immediate supervisor did not supervise in this manner and used micro-managing techniques to supervise the unit.
16. for the second time. Management was great, accommodating, concerned with the well being of employees, also listened to the concerns and needs of the employees.
17. Opening up my own child care center
18. With the changes in Amarillo I have no opportunities to advance my career without going to investigations. Most of the jobs have either been moved to Lubbock or eliminated. We have a roadblock in upper management due to people taking advantage of the retirement system.
19. "No flexibility". I was willing to work with the agency regarding the hours, but my supervisor stated I couldn't do such things for instance. If I knew ahead of time I had a home visit that would run into my children's pick up time of 6:30pm at daycare I would take a lunch around the time they would be getting out of school at 3:00pm or earlier because I knew I wouldn't be able to pick them up from daycare. Or if I had an errand to run at a certain time I would take a lunch at that time

to be convenient for me. I was told I had to take a lunch at a certain time. I was completing all my work load to make the time I was taking lunch appropriate. I was completing all tasks and assignments ahead of time. I just didn't understand why I couldn't take my hour lunch to adjust to my visits. I was making accommodations to the best of my ability. At first I was told long as I take an hour lunch it didn't matter what time, but then it became a problem and before it got out of hand I chose to find a better suitable work environment with a set schedule to accommodate me and my family.

20. Little opportunity for advancement
21. There is no way to work up at some of the jobs you are in. For example I was an HST and there was no incentives or pay ladders to get a raise or work to get raises.
22. None of the above. I am transferring over to the SSCC.

October 2023

1. Retiring due to my department transitioning to privatization.
2. The state refuses to acknowledge there is a severe problem with working conditions with the CPS division. Caseloads are excruciatingly high, supervisors are ill trained, caseworkers are ill trained, families are coerced into submission to follow "recommendations" or threatened to be taken to court or worse, have their children taken away. Families that do follow recommendations are lied to at every corner to continue following requirements. Families are treated as a number in a government book, rather than people. CPS literally destroys peoples lives by giving them cases that destroy their careers and their families. Divisions practice zero ethics or confidentiality. There is no normalcy to this agency, when children are ripped from their home and made to stay in a location til 3, 4, 5 AM then have to go back to a location and go to school. The families have zero civil or even human rights the way they are treated and threatened.
3. Child watch - I voiced my concerns numerous times and no one answered. Someone from state office testified to Judge Jack under oath that cwop is voluntary. That's 100% false!
4. I felt invisible to everybody. The training was not great. Watching the videos is not adequate training. The other admin who had only been there 3 weeks longer tried to train but there was hardly any work. We did maybe 1 hour of work and then sat there the rest of the day. I did not feel productive or accomplished when I left there everyday. My supervisor was not there alot to guide me.
5. Supervisors were unprofessional and created a toxic work environment.
6. My area supervisor, and the supervisor that covered me while in Van Zandt and Rains. With the addition of working in locations/ counties that were 2.5-3 hours from my home. That required me to wake up at 4-5am to get to court hearings. Then lastly the additional sub-stages that I continued to get regardless of how far I was. I was noted for kids that had lps workers without taken into consideration that I had to move 6 of them.
7. The special Investigation division has been put into a position that it was never designed to be in.
8. Training was not at all what I was expecting. Training is rushed and given without step by step instruction. I'm not here to guess, I want to learn. Especially when working in such an intense field and working with families who count on us to help. Training needs to be taken seriously with patience and guidance. I felt like I was trying to teach myself.
9. I worked on a Grant that was due to end in FY 2025. I was given an opportunity to advance and move to another state agency, which I did. I absolutely enjoyed my employment with CPS as a contract manager for the HB5 Capacity Grant and I had the best supervisor anyone could ever hope for, Santa Monica Equivel Alpizar.
10. Better pay
11. My training supervisor was a very stressful individual to work for. It felt like her expectation for a brand new individual worker to be as good as she was. I was not ever able to be as perfect as this seasoned employee was. I thought if I was

patient she would stop belittling and yelling at me. She tried to say she was not expecting us to be perfect, but she kept harassing me and picking on me every day. Anytime I tried to show her something that I thought I was doing right, she would argue with me.

12. I was able to separate from DFPS under the clause of retirement, however I elected to move forward with retirement with 10 years of service due to poor working conditions, namely involving supervision (direct supervisor and Program Director).
13. I had to leave due to personal health and work related stress issues.
14. I began feeling used and abused by supervisor and program director of investigations. I completed back to back removals of children. I would return from placing children at 5am then received calls asking if I would be going on two additional cases at 8am. I had a father in psychosis on my workload brandish a firearm during my interview. I was not provided with resources.

November 2023

1. I felt as if the department I was working for had not made training me a priority. Although I came into the department understanding they were overworked and understaffed I do not think they prepared properly for my arrival. I had been with the agency for 2 weeks and had only done typical HR training. I was told about the important tasks my job needed to complete - however no one was showing me how to start and they were clearly not ready to fill the position. As I mentioned before I do understand the understaffed issue and that it is generally a stressful job - I just don't think there was a priority to help train the new employees. If the new employee's aren't trained and confident then they will not stay.
2. Specifically, the new Training While Working (TWW) Supervisor for APS needs to be evaluated externally. This is a new program but lacks fidelity for the Training Supervisors. There is no continuity among of professionalism toward the trainees. Some TWW Supervisors are in tune to the needs of the trainees but some are just egotistical (caught up with being a training supervisor with the lack of supervisor's training/knowledge) pertaining to leadership skills. Even though I always completed my tasks, I felt rushed to get them done, there was little or no time to reflect on the tasks/content. This is critical for new trainees entering the program. Those that came from another agency like CPS at least had the background knowledge to navigate through the process. I did express this to my TWW Supervisor but it fell on death ears. I also felt that even though I was in training I was not allowed to develop my own style of documentation keeping it within the agency policy and procedures. I was told to "do it this way only". There are multiple ways of using proper grammar without having to be told to write it my way only.
3. The work conditions are so much that I retired early. I would've stayed for many more years if it wasn't for those.
4. Due to the poor working conditions of CWOP children without placement I had to leave
5. I believe I was constantly berated by my supervisor due to my age. I am 64 yrs old while the rest of the employees in my unit were at 30 years younger than me. I didn't have any formal training with this region and office. In this unit , procedures were done quite differently than in my other region and unit. I did not totally grasp why I couldn't request OT or even comp time because I was an HST who was helping the caseworkers. They would set the appointments of parent/child visits yet I had to take Flex Time even though it was impossible to do so within the current week. I made a mistake and owned up to it when I had Covid for the 2nd time. I was asked to get a doctors note; however, I had used an at home test. Afterwards I was counseled and from then on I had to get a doctors note even though I was only absent one day. I asked if I was always going to have to do that and my supervisor said yes. I could not take the amount of stress I was under and made the difficult decision to leave. I just could not take the "talking down" to me anymore. I knew by her actions towards me that she wanted me to leave and I didn't have the energy to fight for myself. My former supervisor is a very bright

lady who is very knowledgeable. However, it's my opinion that she did not respect nor believe what I told her.

6. CWOP and management
7. Between a full case load, seeing children out of region, and working mandatory child without placement shifts, there simply is no work-life balance. The stress levels are extreme, the exhaustion is extreme. I'm burnt out.
8. Work related stress. Some of which could be lessened or avoided if the voices of those at the front lines would be seriously considered..
9. I wanted to take a moment to explain why I have made the difficult decision to leave the agency. As a clinical psychology graduate student, I was initially thrilled to have the opportunity to work with the agency and gain practical experience in the field. However, as time went on, I realized that the hours required by the agency were conflicting with my class schedule, studying, and other school commitments. It was a difficult decision for me to make because I genuinely enjoyed the work and the people I had the chance to collaborate with. I believe that the agency has a lot to offer and provides valuable services to our community. Unfortunately, my academic obligations had to take priority at this stage in my education.
10. None of the above. Survey requires an answer, so I entered sled-employment, but that is not the reason. I had to go to Empower, the SSCS or be without employment. I have promoted to a higher position and hope I can assist with the transition to Stage II. I love my work with the State and my Supervisor and co-workers. I would have remained in my position if privatization were not occurring. I plan to do my best to help this initiatives success because I am dedicated to Child Welfare as a Licensed Social Worker, here in Texas.
11. Management was very poor. I was constantly being harassed. Management created a toxic environment

AGENCY FEEDBACK: EMPLOYEE COMMENTS

6. If you would not want to work for this agency again, why?

September 2023

1. I would not work for Texas CPS again unless there is better management involved, which includes; not lowering the standard for supervisors to become supervisors, maintaining high moral, character, integrity and, providing the proper support needed in this job force.
2. I said it above.
3. I worked for the state 10yrs and got a cost of living raise one time. With my new position I am eligible for annual raises.
4. Poor moral, lack of communication, unrealistic work/life expectations. We are expected to place our own families and personal lives 2nd for a job that pays horrible and families that hate us. The pay and benefits are not worth the sacrifice our personal lives/families have to make.
5. If they start me where I left off or more.
6. It's not so much that I would not want to work for this agency again, but that I would only do so if things improved. I feel as though the data that is being tracked is more important to leadership than the lives of the people being served.
7. I would only want to come back if there were a major overhaul regarding caseworkers burnout, mindsets, and a change in regards to child safety.
8. not valued/appreciated
9. The nature of the job, the hate from families, the policies we have to follow, the stress.
10. I found that people in clerk and admin positions were not valued and the agency does not care about work experience when promoting employees.

11. It's a maybe, more than a no. I would be willing to work for child protective services again if I found the work I did meaningful and that there was purpose behind most work tasks rather than just checking boxes.
12. It's driven by producing numbers. The employers mental health or overall wellbeing doesn't not matter. The pay does not match the amount of stress that comes from the job.
13. CWOP demanding policy is out of control

October 2023

1. The state refuses to acknowledge there is a sever problem with working conditions with the CPS division. Caseloads are excruciatingly high, supervisors are ill traileed, caseworkers are ill trained, families are coerced into submission to follow "recommendations" or threatened to be taken to court or worse, have their children taken away. Families that do follow recommendations are lied to at every corner to continue following requirements. Families are treated as a number in a government book, rather than people. CPS literally destroys peoples lives by giving them cases that destroy their careers and their families. Divisions practice zero ethics or confidentiality. There is no normalcy to this agency, when children are ripped from their home and made to stay in a location til 3, 4, 5 AM then have to go back to a location and go to school. The families have zero civil or even human rights the way they are treated and threatened.
2. I'm a tenured worker. The agency only got worse with each passing year.
3. Hopefully going to work in child support. My sister retired from there and I put in my application.
4. My position wont exist within the agency in few more months. I begged for help and direction when my cases were drowning, the only person who actually helped was my mentor not the 2 supervisors who couldn't decide who was to be helping me and not the person over them who only stepped in when I called her crying cause I had 6 kids being discharged and the supervisors wouldn't answer my calls, and then afterwards I had a miscarriage and came back to work work a write up and from The upper supervisor cause the other two over me had left. Then when I attempted to discuss some of those things, she had already made up her mind and didn't care what I had to say cause of my stats.
5. Special Investigation division has been reduced from what it was originally designed to be, now they are just simply social workers.
6. If the training was better
7. The supervisor made it a hostile place.
8. Considering the last 3 months of my service time I would not return to DFPS for employment. My experience with supervision during those 3 months was negative at best. Supervision made it clear my personal obligations or stressors were not their concern in the slightest, this was made clear when there was no empathy when my primary vehicle could not be operated due to a motor vehicle accident, yet I was still expected to report to work with no exception or understanding of the situation. In addition, I was made to feel as if I didn't matter. This was exemplified by a failure to ensure I could work at the headquarters location I was hired for, and I was asked to work in a larger metropolitan area. This area was one I was, of course, vaguely familiar with but also one in which I was not completely aware of areas that could pose a safety concern for myself.
9. The agency's goals & values are different than my own.
10. Unethical practices and hypocrisy from leadership
11. Unless leadership and treatment of investigators changes.

November 2023

1. I think due to the fact that they are over worked, underfunded, and understaffed I will more than likely not be returning to the agency. I have only had the minimal personal experience in the city I worked at however I knew other people who had the same experience with the same location. Other cities might be able to handle things better. The other departments I was able to observe seemed to have things

under a little more control - so it might be a supervisor issue. I think the supervisor I had was new at that current position (having it less than a year) and everyone has to learn how to be a boss at some point. However, the way it was lead wasn't for me. I do hope that it gets easier for everyone in the department as when I was there I could sense a lot of tension. I mainly hope this not only for the sanity of the individuals working there but for the children the organization is working for as they are the main goal.

2. Direct management & regional management are very supportive. They trusted and empowered me to continue to do my job well. However, they wield little power and authority over the day to day operations. They must yield to state policies and practices, which I do not believe are in the best interest of our children in foster care or our employees. CWOP has become increasingly more demanding with zero added compensation for supervisors. We are required to work 6-8 shifts + per month and leave our families for comp time and no compensation. For those of us who have been here for 10+ years, we have more than enough comp time. We need CWOP overtime pay and increased salaries. (As a Licensed Master Social Worker, I am greatly underpaid for my skills, even including the benefits). Additionally, employees have been physically harmed at CWOP, and their property has been damaged with no compensation or concern from the state. CWOP also does more harm than help for our youth. Some locations (Temple) are known to sex traffickers as housing our youth and are not safe havens. The location in Killeen isn't a place we would approve on a home study, yet we allow our kids to live there. The final straw for me was being required to do CWOP on holidays. I sacrificed my physical and mental health for this job early on because I believed in its mission. I sacrificed countless hours with my own children. However, I set the boundary several years ago that my family would have to come first. As a single mom, I am just not willing to leave my children on holidays anymore. Finally, the governor's decision to deny trans children right and even have CPS investigate trans youth is harmful to our children, parents, and state. We should be focusing on actual child abuse and righting the wrongs we've created that led our state to get sued. Additionally, the decision to remove a DEI question from our interviews does a disservice to our youth and families. We need to know that people we hire are adequately prepared to work with a diverse group.
3. The whole agency is a mess and I don't see it improving enough for me to want to go back.
4. Overworked high caseload little help from peers and staff.
5. DFPS has terrible management practices. Not FBCE but the management of DFPS. They are so unprofessional and childish. I am appalled at the practices allowed.
6. Reasons above and less opportunity to grow in career as my current position.

7. What areas would you like to change in your agency? Other:

September 2023

1. I strongly recommend that HHS implement immediate mandatory training for all supervisors/managers.
2. Work life balance was off I felt like I was at work all day
3. Unreasonable job expectations, i.e. time frames & caseloads
4. I wouldn't be leaving if more job opportunities were in Amarillo.

October 2023

1. More support for staff (admins need better pay, workers need more \$ & more, better & more providers
2. I would improve the communication practices between agency areas of the same interest.

November 2023

1. State policies are far removed from best practice in the field.

8. Give us your ideas. What would you recommend the agency do differently?

September 2023

1. Provide more transparency, more support, hire management that is in this job for the right reasons, listen to employees more, have higher ups do some of the same work caseworkers do occasionally so they know what we go through (ex. CWOP).
2. 1. The agency needs to be honest with candidates in the interview process. Candidates are human beings with their own lives, budgets, and accompanying contingencies which are affected by their employment. Take sixty seconds to provide candidates with an accurate and complete description of the position which they are applying for and do not make false and misleading statements to induce them to take a position in order to satisfy your budget. 2. Train your management team. I learned after I on-boarded that the supervisor assigned to me had not been promoted into their position but rather had volunteered for it, and it showed. After I would meet with them they would have immediate impromptu huddles with the other two supervisors to discuss how our meeting went. My supervisor would also bring-in another supervisor to observe the meetings between themselves and me. It was unprofessional and uncomfortable. 3. The pay is not enough to survive off of and to meet basic cost of living. I was required to work a second job in order to try and make ends-meet and it still wasn't enough. At the end of the day the purpose of a job is to provide income to pay bills. The position I was in was not meeting that basic requirement. 4. I was permitted to work remotely only two days a week. It so happened that my two remote days were nearly always scheduled for in-field appointments, so I really never got to work remotely.
3. GET RID OF CWOP!!!!!!!
4. Policies within CPS based on new laws continue to be a concern. In addition privatizing had a great effect. There is no communication of what things look like during transition. Families cannot live like that.
5. REALISTIC WORK LIFE BALANCE FOR THE AMOUNT IF BULLSHIT PAY. I will be making 75k a year at new job plus a much more realistic expectation of work life balance.
6. Pay raise for administrative assistant to keep up with economy
7. Training should be with mentor a lot sooner rather than later
8. Listen to support staff.
9. Treat employees with dignity and respect. I've seen this agency consistently treat people unfairly with no consequences being done. There have been multiple surveys and feedback given but I've not seen any changes. Upper management constantly blames the person who leaves the agency as the reason why things didn't work out. If there is a pattern of people leaving due to the supervisor, this needs to be taken into account.
10. Appropriately train workers. Actually listen to workers concerns. Acknowledge workers hard work rather punish the good workers with higher/unattainable caseloads that hold more difficult cases Remove the "I gotcha" stigma from the environment Push for a healthier work life balance Push for a healthier, positive working environment Leadership should be speaking to lower level workers on what is not working. Just as we do with our families Do not reward the workers that are not promoting child safety with career advancements and merits just because they have tenure or because they are close with leadership Speak with the judges in all counties about CPS concerns Be present and actively listen. People are afraid to speak up due to retaliation or fear of discipline for speaking up. An entire overhaul needs to be completed
11. Because CWOP was my breaking point I suggest the agency find an agency to run this. Due to the lack of structure, rules and expectations in CWOP the youth take full advantage of this. The youth are not required to attend school, take their medication or clean up the home they are residing in, and if they don't want to go

to placement they can decline the placement. CWOP is meant to be a short term placement option but for some of these youth it has become their longterm placement and have aged out from CWOP. This situation has cause a lot of issues for staff and they become a longterm issues for society.

12. n/a
13. More pay, better training and better policies and procedures to follow. Less invasive on families that are not abusing or neglecting their children.
14. Ensure supervisors are competent for positions to which they are hired. My reason for leaving was because I was engaged in the removal of a child while covering for a co-worker, and as such a supervisor other than my supervisor was overseeing the removal. I thought the removal was poorly conceived and myself and fellow workers were not capable of meeting the medical needs of a 12 year old physically and intellectually handicapped child who had been bedridden since birth. Before taking custody of this child, I expressed my concerns with the covering supervisor. There was documentation from a pediatric neurologist that this child should not be removed from the home. While I agreed that CPS taking TMC of the child was appropriate, sending one caseworker (with no medical assistance) was not a prudent action and threatened the safety of that child. This removal was a nightmare and coupled with the fact that the supervisor overseeing the removal was living 200 miles away and had no daily contact with his unit. In fact, the 5 employees who came under his supervision quit the Department within 30 days of his arrival. He had NO worker to send to assist with the removal. The next week I was called in by my supervisor for a coaching conference and was told that "by not following the supervisor's directives, I jeopardized the child's safety". I think that conference was a big CYA for that supervisor and if anyone jeopardized that child's safety, it was the supervisor who persisted with a poorly planned removal. I wored for the Department for 4.5 years. I am retired from the military and retired from teaching(TRS). I receive my social security check also. I am not intending on going to work and genuinely enjoyed working in Family Based Safety Services. It was challenging but had its rewards. And now, I am tired of writing my complaints and I wish the Department and any co-workers who remain, good luck.
15. 90% to full time telework would have been great for someone like myself. I did not need to be in the office daily as a PD and I had also lost my car because the job did not pay enough to keep it.
16. Supervisors should be consistent with the expectations of their leadership vs. creating their own rules. I enjoyed my job at APS and loved the population I worked with. The ONLY reason I left was due to my immediate supervisor.
17. More leadership that are well versed in mental and behavioral health needs. CPS has a doctor on staff, why not have something similar in terms of mental health. A consultant treatment team of independent clinicians - therapists, psychologist, and psychiatrist. Kids should not be allowed to stay past their discharge date in psychiatric hospitals (on extended placement days or child specific contracts) because it is detrimental to their mental health, risks further trauma, and presents sex trafficking risks. Sex traffickers are known to send recruiters to inpatient psych facilities and CPS youth are an extremely vulnerable population. The lack of transparency from leadership is commonly felt by staff. The culture of management is to lead blindly, asking workers to do tasks to check boxes of leadership demands, without anybody seeming to really know why. Management doesn't know, they're just doing what their boss told them. Most work feels like pointless box checking. Maybe if we knew the point, it wouldn't feel pointless :) Find/fund/focus on mental health resources for kids. Not enough access to therapists specializing in trauma. Consider setting aside money to pay for therapists who don't take insurance and their private pay fee is \$130-\$170 a session, but they are certified in EMDR or Cognitive Processing Therapy or DBT. Empirically supported trauma treatments. Virtual therapists who can continue with the child despite their many placement moves. The Department is spending

THOUSANDS of dollars on one child at a time for a short term stay in a "sub-acute" program (which is made up and ineffective). Why not invest money in an empirically supported trauma focused treatment? More opportunities for financial incentives. Aside from the 5% raises across the board in 2023, I had not gotten a raise since my position change in 2019 and there were no opportunities to get a raise outside of changing positions or the few and far between 1x merit pays. Yearly performance based raises would offer incentive to continue to build a strong, well-informed, well-paid workforce. It's incredibly frustrating to want to do so much for these kids and families but are often struggling to get over all the red tape. I think a lot of good workers leave because you can go make a difference somewhere else and it's a heck of a lot easier.

18. The area I worked in this time was a good non-hostile environment with management that understood the work and work load. I would love to have been offered an exit interview from the last 2 positions I had which were the total opposite of this position. Is it customary for ares that know they are a hostile unhealthy environment not to offer exit interviews?
19. Address the issues with child watch
20. Provide child care to workers
21. Hire enough staff to have manageable caseload. Count the number of children, not just cases. Get CPI and FBSS under the same umbrella. Each department has different standards with respect to safety. FBSS & investigations are too often not on the same page with respect to safety/supervision.
22. Bring back job opportunities to the Amarillo area like we previously had.
23. Clearer job description, flexibility,
24. Some of the real life situations that workers have been through need to be heard. It also seems as though are own families are not important and there is no work-life balance with this job
25. Get CWOP under control and more pay for the work we have to do
26. Flexible with parents schedule
27. Be more supportive to staff and better compensation
28. CWOP is another reason I left. The state needs to figure out how to hire people or open a facility just for the CWOP kids.
29. I would have stayed with the state and retired if private agencies were not taking over.

October 2023

1. Privatizing could work if done correctly. It was done so abruptly & seems like several things were miscalculated or not fully understood. Taking the time to slowly transition would have been better for everyone. Several great, committed employees & their vast wealth of knowledge & skills were lost by either being forced into other positions, other outside jobs, or gone altogether. Things could have been done much much differently & more fairly for the employees.
2. n/a
3. This agency is way to top heavy. You have 1000 directors making decisions that no one can agree on, the trying to send all of those decisions down to families, without even knowing or understanding the scope of work that is completed with the families. The agency refuses to pay people what they are worth, continuing to allow caseworker, the ones who do real work to live on the cuff of poverty. The agency needs to be completely dismantled and completely rebuilt or passed off to privatization.
4. Better training, organization, better management, better work environment.
5. Fix cwop!! The agency has had more than enough time!!
6. Hands on training. And up to date training manual for all administrative.
7. Region 8, SE Military office program directors and supervisors need training on communication, and professionalism. The turnover rate is high and employees do not stay. Need a full-time switchboard operator instead of pulling someone from other departments.

8. I would recommend that after hours shifts for CWAs would be on a sign up voluntary basis instead of mandatory.
9. I would recommend that workers not assist in other counties without a clear structure for who will be overseeing their cases. I recommend that other counties be prepared with resource lists, contact information for resources and attorneys, and a knowledge of what will be showing late in stats due to incompleteness of the previous workers. I also would recommend paying attention when placing workers where they actually live and not just what office they are housed in. I was housed in Gilmer and lived in Atlanta. I chose this as my mother was supervisor over Bowie and Cass County. That meant the areas I lived closest to were not an option. My sister worked in Daingerfield. I was told that also meant it was not an option. My closest counties to be housed in were Upshur, Titus, Marshall or Longview. All of them are close to an hour away already. Then I was sent to assist in other counties even further. I did bring up to my supervisor the distance. Nothing was done about it. I was told to stay there for 3-4 days out of the week but I am a single parent and chose to not allow someone else to raise my child while I was gone half the week.
10. Step by step training. We are not here to figure it out by ourselves.
11. Investigate incidents involving supervisors affecting workers' resignation.
12. I would recommend the agency improve the processes of mitigating CWOP children into placement with CPA's, GRO's, TPA and Foster Homes. There is a lack of communication, urgency, follow up, determination of LOC and documentation during crucial timeframes for placement of children in CWOP. Also, I feel that the children are not being addressed for their individual needs, behaviors and situations. I was a foster child so I see it from all angles now that I have worked for the Agency. There is no simple solution to the CWOP conundrum but most all children want the same thing and that is attention, safety, normalcy and love. They want a place to belong and feel valued. Part of that means that they want structure and guidance. All I wanted was to have a safe place to do what I needed to do (School, work, play, social events etc...) to get old enough to be able to take care of myself. I believe that most if not all of the children want the same things. Please fix the CWOP situation. I am not opposed to systematic remedies, like dormitories or housing with leadership and staff ran by the state agency or at least overseen by the state whose primary concern and goal is to respect, nurture and provide the children with a safe environment. What we are doing is not working. Taking accountability for this situation by implementing a better situation with CWOP is necessary. We need to find out what the children would like us to do, maybe take a survey with options for them to consider and ponder that hasn't been offered or introduced to them. Just my opinion.
13. I would definitely recommend higher pay, better training for supervisors, and actually creating a buddy system for the caseworkers.
14. I would recommend that the training supervisor not be so rough with training. I understand that we need to be trained, but her style was not achievable with the stress I went through. There should be some middle ground, instead of her looking for someone that can be as good as her. Nothing was ever good enough, and if I had time I know I would have improved. Maybe the Training supervisor could show how she wanted the report to be, and then build on it throughout the training. Once it was complete, then give recommendations for improvement areas with the trainers immediate supervisor.
15. The leadership I encountered seemed to carry themselves in a manner to protect each other, whether their behavior was in accordance with policy or not. This creates difficulty for an employee to ensure they can trust leadership or management to act in accordance with policy. I had a negative relationship with my most recent supervisor, which was not how I would have characterized my previous relationships with supervisors. Some characterized my most recent relationship as if I had a moving target on me. This is concerning after 10 years of blemish-free

service to the State of Texas. This relationship had a very negative impact on my impression of DFPS. Employees with history and tenure with the Department should be respected for the skill set they bring to the workplace, and this is what I would change. Historically, while work at the office was encouraged, we still had the ability and option to work remotely. In my most recent position, this was absolutely not an option, and I was micromanaged in the situation if I did work remotely. Consistency in the stance on this should be achieved between stages of service as well as whether these are traditional or after-hour work settings.

16. Trust & value front line investigator input & relying less on statistics & matrix's to make decisions.
17. Policies should apply to all uniformly. Leadership should not be allowed to gaslight workers just because they don't want to do what was asked of them. Workers should be treated with respect. Bullying should not be tolerated or accepted in the workplace. Just because someone does not believe that a person is sick, does not mean that the person should not be believed or listened to. Mentorship should be overhauled based on mentor bias and attitude toward new workers.
18. More standards of accountability for executive leadership
19. Child protective services needs to treat their caseworkers with more respect and dignity. There is a pervasive attitude that caseworkers are easily replaced. That has never been more false than in the last year. There's very little thought, or consideration, given to the areas that are seeing extremely high rates of turnover. Upper management continues to expect those left to step up and fill in the gaps. The gaps are too wide. Upper management needs to fill in the gaps themselves. Upper management also needs to stop using the word crisis as the reason for making caseworkers do more work. This crisis within Child protective services has been going on for 7-8 years. Management has done nothing to alleviate the problems, especially when it comes to child without placement shifts. Their solution was merely to require caseworkers to do more shifts. Upper management needs to be held fully accountable for this ongoing crisis. There is a saying among caseworkers that nobody gets fired at CPS. Perhaps if more people were fired those left behind, but start doing the work that they really should instead of passing the book. There's also another saying among caseworkers at Cps that upper management is just waiting for the nonprofit organizations to take over the conservatorship stage of service, and really never wanted or cared to do anything about the crisis, and what it all boils down to is that the children are suffering. Needs are not getting met. Families are not being reunified. And who takes the brunt of this? Who gets treated horribly by attorneys and judges and other community stakeholders? The caseworkers that who and it's not right.
20. Treat employees like humans.

November 2023

1. I say that I truly enjoyed working with my co-workers and the site supervisor. They all made me feel as part of a family there. I highly recommend meeting with each cohort group alone without the TWW Supervisors present to truly develop an open line of trust to enhance and improve the program. The trainees really want to be in the program but be treated by some of the TWW Supervisors as if one is to do as I say only is unjust to the agency and unprofessional. When I was offered the job opportunity, I knew it was not for the pay, I really wanted to make a difference and help the clients in need. I felt the stress to resign and I decided to relocate to another city. I wish the success of the new TWW Program so that the clients may benefit as well. Thank you for this opportunity to truly share my concerns and as well as thank the agency for the opportunity for employment.
2. Field staff, specifically caseworkers and supervisors, should be included in various state office workgroups. They should be asked to testify before the legislature when making decisions that impact the agency. We should be more transparent regarding CWOP. Regional staff and the commissioner should be visiting all locations to see what is really going on, as that will likely inspire more swift and

effective action. The trauma informed care training staff receive is insufficient. All staff should be TBRI trained to avoid causing more harm/trauma to children. We should hire more contractors for CWOP, and they should also be TBRI trained. Supervisors should receive OT pay for CWOP.

3. CPS staff should not be given the added responsibility and stress of CWOP shifts. There should be dedicated staff who have been properly trained to cover CWOP
4. Child watch for children without placement needs to be resolved before I would consider coming back. I had to deal with it for several years and as time went by the extra work and poor conditions of this extra duty only got worse. Also I had no growth left in my area. I would suggest that if performance is good, that we also get a raise.
5. Provide a set number of cases, more help from staff, more training, use of docusign
6. Have the same policies/procedures in every region and CPS office.
7. PAY STAFF WHAT THEY DESERVE!!! TRAIN MANAGEMENT BETTER.
8. Express appreciation. Employees Don't just do their jobs. They go up up and beyond every day for youth on their caseload. That is not at all recognized. Many times employees are paying out of their pockets to cover additional needs of youths on their caseload or spending extra time with those teens needing additional emotional support. Managers don't see this or recognize the time we spend away from our own families in order to see to the needs of our clients.
9. I have loved working for he State of Texas! Especially with the TFF Pilot Program. I believe in it 100%. I would definitely suggest following the timelines from when you receive a TFF case, until 14 days later you have to be prepared at the Order Setting Hearing. It's understandable when it's a removal/emergency situation to have a shortened amount of time/and Grace by judges but, when it becomes common practice to have to do so much in 3-5 days, it is setting workers up for failure. Time is needed to do things in an excellent way. Also, I feel the pay and benefits are great! I was hoping to retire in a few years with the State. There seems to be little to no real appreciation by State office of the work being done by those in front lines. Please listen-to make changes, not to ignore. So many are burnt out. (The best employees). Work/life balance is really difficult with the hard nature of this job, but when procedures from those who can do something about it, aren't negotiated or put in place with a collaborative effort. I recently worked so hard to reach Senior Advanced Specialist IV. I was so proud to learn and achieve this level certification. Before I left, I did not see this reflected in my pay or on my status in CAPPs. No "great job" or recognition was given above my Supervisor or PD who were awesome! I feel like I had to fight for my raise/level and still haven't gotten it. I have loved working with my families, keeping children safe and following the Practice Model". I think it would help if all in the agency followed what we uphold as very important! I am being honest so that others can stay. I don't mean to sound critical. I only mean this as constructive. If the Agency would truly like to change the turnover rate and retention rate, please cap caseloads, help CPI be accountable for their tasks before turning over cases. Just a few thoughts! Thank you for wanting to listen to me! I would work for the State again, but have to leave for now. Many blessings!
10. When discussing the agency's operations and potential improvements, I wanted to share my views on the concept of remote work versus the traditional office schedule. From a personal perspective, I strongly believe that remote work should be made available rather than sticking to the 8am-5pm office hours. One of the key advantages of remote work is the increased flexibility it offers to employees. By allowing individuals to work remotely, they have the freedom to manage their tasks and prioritize their workload in a way that suits their personal circumstances. This flexibility enables better work-life balance, reduces commuting time, and promotes a healthier well-being. Moreover, remote work often enhances productivity. By eliminating the distractions that can occur in an office environment, employees can focus more effectively on their tasks and deliver better results. This increased

productivity can ultimately benefit the agency as a whole. In addition, remote work promotes inclusivity and diversity. By removing the requirement for employees to physically be in the office, it opens up opportunities for individuals from different locations or with varying abilities to participate in the workforce. This can lead to a broader talent pool and foster a more inclusive working environment.

11. I was happy and would have remained in my current position. I feel I was very good at being a CVS Supervisor and my Program was very supportive. I had the best supervisor in the Department and am sad our team had to break up. I have worked for the Department in 3 position for the past 12 years.
12. The state needs to investigate and be more aware of the treatment of employees and the toxic work environments created by supervisors and program directors